

Opposition to HB 198

1. The proponents of this Bill often say, "This changes nothing. It simply codifies existing language. From the dictionary we find the definition of change: "The act, process or result of changing, altering or modification". We also find the definition of modification: "The change undergone by a word". I'm sure that if we had a legal dictionary we would find the phrase for CODIFICATION to be "the act of changing, modifying or morphing the legal code".
2. It is my understanding that section 2 of the Bill changes Montana law and allows eminent domain for the sole purpose of economic gain of certain corporations.
3. The attached map shows an area in Jefferson County proposed to be impacted by MSTI. 80% of the line will be on private lands, and an additional portion will be so close to the boundary between public and private lands that neighbors will certainly be impacted.
4. At least three new energy corridors will be identified in Broadwater, Jefferson, Madison, and Beaverhead Counties. The reason for this is apparently because of a deal struck early on between MEIC and Northwestern Energy. They recognized early on that it is easier to take on the citizens of the State than to take on environmental groups.
5. If HB 198 is truly designed to correct a situation caused by inadequacies of the permitting process, don't steamroll the entire state with fundamental changes to eminent domain law. Simply cause MDEQ to do the job correctly in the first place.

I appreciate the opportunity to stand in opposition to this Bill, and I hope you will join me. There are so many reasons this is a bad Bill that it would take hours of in depth discussion. There are ordinary citizens from across the State, from Glendive to Lima, from Thomson Falls to Alzada, who express opposition much better than I. But as most ordinary citizens, they find that a trip to Helena at this time of year is difficult. I don't presume to speak for them, but I hope you have heard their voices.

Thank you for hearing my opposition.

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Legend

all_msti_alternatives
MSTI 1/4 mile Privately owned lands

Jefferson_shp

OwnerClass

Local Government
Private
Right of Way
State Government
USDA Forest Service
USDI Bureau of Land Management
Water

JEFFERSON COUNTY

